

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 00924 100405Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /068 W
-----047993 100408Z /64
R 081420Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2464

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SHUM, PA
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT STROESSNER

1. WHILE IN WASHINGTON I VISITED WITH SENATOR CHURCH AND
DISCUSSED THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PARAGUAY. HE
PRESENTED ME WITH A LETTER SIGNED BY 22 SENATORS. HE
REQUESTED THAT I PRESENT THIS LETTER TO PRESIDENT STROESSNER.

2. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER IS AS FOLLOWS:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:
WE ARE CONCERNED OVER REPORTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
IN PARAGUAY AS RECENTLY DETAILED IN THE INTERNATIONAL
LEAGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AUTHORED BY BEN STEPHANSKY
AND DAVID HELFELD. IT HAS BEEN ALLEGED THAT SOME CITIZENS
HAVE BEEN DETAINED WITHOUT BEING BROUGHT TO TRIAL, THAT
OTHERS HAVE BEEN HARASSED AND TORTURED BY THE SECURITY
FORCES, AND THAT OTHERS HAVE DISAPPEARED ALTOGETHER WHILE
IN THE CUSTODY OF THE POLICE. AS MEMBERS OF THE
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS
OUR DEEP CONCERN OVER THE INFRINGEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL
RIGHTS AND DENIAL OF BASIC INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS FOR
SOME PARAGUAYAN CITIZENS.

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WE COMMEND THE FACT THAT THE STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN PARAGUAY DURING THE PAST YEAR HAS IMPROVED. WE
URGE YOU TO CONTINUE TO FACILITATE THIS CHANGE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE DEMOCRATIC IDEALS THAT ARE EMBODIED
IN THE CONSTITUTION OF PARAGUAY.

WE URGE YOU TO RESTORE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

FOR ALL CITIZENS WHO ARE BEING DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL,
AND WE ASK THAT YOU PROVIDE THE WHEREABOUTS OF THOSE
WHO HAVE DISAPPEARED.

FINALLY, MR. PRESIDENT, WE APPLAUD YOUR DECISION
TO COOPERATE WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON
HUMAN RIGHTS. WE STRONGLY REQUEST THAT YOU ALLOW THE
COMMISSION TO BEGIN ITS WORK IMMEDIATELY.

MR. PRESIDENT, WE TAKE NOTE OF THE FACT THAT YOU
WERE RE-ELECTED ON FEBRUARY 12TH FOR A NEW TERM OF
OFFICE OF FIVE YEARS AND WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL SOON
CONSIDER REMOVING THE STATE OF SIEGE AND PUTTING INTO
EFFECT THE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
LEAGUE'S REPORT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

SINCERELY. END TEXT.

3. THE SIGNERS ARE:
FRANK CHURCH
LLOYD BENTSEN
DICK CLARK
EDWARD ZORINSKY
EDWARD M. KENNEDY
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EDWARD W. BROOKE
BIRCH BAYH
CLAIBORNE PELL
CLIFFORD P. CASE
HOWARD M. METZENBAUM
WILLIAM D. HATHAWAY
ALAN CRANSTON
PAUL SARBANES
MURIEL HUMPHREY
WILLIAM ROTH
JAMES ABOUREZK
WALTER D. HUDDLESTON
JOHN A. DURKIN
DENNIS DE CONCINI
GEORGE MCGOVERN
JOHN HEINZ
HARRISON A. WILLIAMS, JR.

4. I PLAN TO REQUEST AN AUDIENCE WITH PRESIDENT
STROESSNER IN ORDER TO GIVE TO HIM PERSONALLY THE
MESSAGE OF ASISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN CONTAINED IN
STATE 47666.

5. REQUEST DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION TO DELIVER THE
SENATORS' LETTER AT THE SAME TIME.

WHITE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 08 mar 1978
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Date: N/A
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Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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TAGS: SHUM, PGOV, PA, US, (STROESSNER, ALFREDO)
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